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SUBJECT: DARFUR: IMPROVING AMIS UNDER AGWAI

REF: KHARTOUM 01043

Classified By: CDA A. Fernandez, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary and comment

¶1. (SBU) With the arrival of the new AMIS force commander, the international community has the opportunity to strengthen the security provisions of the DPA to increase stability on the ground. U.S. leadership could lead to substantive improvements in the operation of the Cease-fire Commission and Joint Commission, the provision of non-military logistical support to the DPA signatory to stem the breakdown in the movement and decrease attacks on AMIS and NGOs, and the establishment of an effective Security Assessment Team. Throughout, we must press Agwai and the AU leadership to remain focused on targeted, realistic steps that can bolster his credibility and forestall the further deterioration in AMIS operations in the period before the deployment of the UN/AU hybrid peace-keeping force. The Embassy will host a meeting with the AMIS leadership and key donors to build momentum for these goals, which could then be reinforced through discussions in Addis Ababa. End summary and comment.

Agwai's Arrival an Opportunity for Change

¶2. (SBU) The arrival of Gen. Martin Luther Agwai to Sudan on July 2 to serve as force commander of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) (and ultimately of the UN/AU hybrid peace-keeping force in Darfur) presents an opportunity to strengthen the security provisions of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). Given the time-frame for deployment of the UN Heavy Support Package and the hybrid operation, improvements of crucial security provisions in the near term would bolster Agwai at the beginning of his tenure. The June 25 to 28 conference hosted by the AU (reftel) provided a forum for discussion of specific steps to improve the security environment.

¶3. (SBU) Three principal ideas to improve security arrangements emerged from the conference. In the coming weeks, the USG can exert leadership in Khartoum and Addis Ababa to: 1) enhance the operation of the Cease-fire Commission (CFC) and the Joint Commission, 2) facilitate the delivery of non-military logistical support to the DPA signatories, and 3) establish an effective Security Assessment Team (SAT) to balance the co-opted Security Arrangements Commission. Within the next week, the Embassy will convene a meeting of the AMIS leadership and key donors,

including the UK, EU, Netherlands, and Canada, to build momentum for these proposals and develop specific action plans.

Enhancing the CFC and JC

¶4. (SBU) Delegates to the recent conference concurred that the relationship between the DPA signatories and AMIS has deteriorated in recent months as a result of attacks on AMIS forces that were attributed to the SLM, the reduction in the monthly subsistence allowance (MSA) for cease-fire representatives, and personal animosity between SLM leaders and the former AMIS Force Commander. This deterioration has inhibited the effectiveness of the First Chamber of the CFC, leading at one point to a suspension of SLM participation. While the SLM now participates at the headquarters level, its participation in the sectors fluctuates. Conference participants suggested that Agwai use his arrival to address the reasonable complaints of the SLM and build confidence between AMIS and the movement.

¶5. (SBU) One important element is the renewal of AMIS operations in SLM-areas, which was largely suspended after the killing of five AMIS soldiers in Umm Barru and the theft of 13 AMIS vehicles in Labado. Renewed operations would ease information-gathering for CFC investigations and serve as a catalyst for renewed cooperation between the SLM and AMIS. Given the breakdown within the SLM command, Agwai will have to work adeptly with SLM area commanders. An enhanced AU political presence in Darfur would be an important resource. Assignment of technical experts, such as those on legal affairs, to the staff of the Force Commander/CFC chairman

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would also increase the level of professionalism in the First Chamber and during CFC investigations. AU/AMIS would also benefit from local Darfuri non-partisan expertise on an advisory basis.

¶6. (SBU) A dispute on sector-level representation has undermined the Second Chamber of the CFC. Both the NCP and the DoCs have taken maximalist positions: the NCP opposes any sector-level representation while the movements demand representation in all sectors. Conference participants suggested that AMIS, under Agwai's leadership, broker a compromise that would allow DoC representation at the sector-level in areas where the DoCs have forces on the ground. The international community could support Agwai by pressing for acceptance of this compromise with the NCP and the movements.

¶7. (SBU) The Joint Commission has ceased to function, according to AMIS representatives at the conference. The AU Secretary of the Joint Commission characterized the last JC meeting as "vicious" and said that the Joint Commission would be "suspended indefinitely" unless it could be reformed. Other participants noted that addressing the deficiencies in the JC would require concerted effort in both Khartoum and Addis Ababa. Preliminary steps could include a commitment to hold the JC meetings on a monthly basis to lower the number of CFC investigations for review, better coordination among key participants prior to each JC in order to keep the agenda focused, and agreement during the JC meeting on requested follow-up action from the international community to reinforce JC decisions with the Sudanese Government and the DPA signatories.

Non-Military Logistical Support

¶8. (SBU) The conference provided new momentum for the provision of non-military logistical support for the DPA signatories. All of the delegates agreed that such support

was essential to shore up the SLM, stem banditry, and provide an incentive to the DPA non-signatories to participate in the political process. AU, UN, and international representatives agreed that the reduction in the monthly subsistence allowance (MSA) for cease-fire commission representatives had been necessary but had also deprived the SLM of its main source of income. Attacks in Darfur on AMIS and non-governmental organizations, chiefly in the form of car-jacking, had then increased. While it would take many months for the UN/AU hybrid to deploy, the criminality/security situation would worsen.

¶9. (SBU) The DPA provides for a Logistics Coordination Committee (LCC) to manage delivery of non-military support. While establishment of the LCC prior to disarmament of the SLM would predate the sequence stipulated in the DPA, the NCP representatives voiced no objection. Sam Ibok, the AU Head of Darfur Peace Implementation, said that the non-military logistical support model had been tested in Burundi to great success. The German Government had coordinated donor assistance, which was provided to area commanders through the World Food Program (WFP). The commanders distributed food and medical supplies to the fighters in exchange for their arms. While the commanders retained the weapons in the event of an emergency, more centralized control reduced rogue attacks by low-ranking fighters. Ibok suggested that a similar model could be successful in Darfur. (Note: In a recent meeting with CDA Fernandez, outgoing AMIS Force Commander Luke Aprezi said that provision of non-military support for the SLM was essential to reducing violence in Darfur. End note.)

Security Assessment Team

¶10. (C) With the exception of the NCP delegates, participants in the conference expressed their view that the Security Arrangements Commission under the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority (TDRA) was not neutral because of the NCP chairmanship. SLM representatives emphasized the importance of an effective Security Assessment Team (SAT) as a counter-weight. NCP officials continue to press for the rapid creation of the SAT with a Sudanese chairman, contrary to the DPA provision allowing for a foreign general. In subsequent conversations with Poloff, SLM members said that they had discussed the possibility of a Norwegian general as

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the SAT chair. Norway had been receptive to the idea, but requested USG assistance to expedite the request.
FERNANDEZ